

Corn and Soybean Acres Expected to Dip in 2004

The information contained in this report is based on a planting intention survey of farm operators conducted during the first two weeks of March. Final planted acreage will depend on factors such as weather during planting and market conditions. More information on planted acres will be available in the Acreage Report published June 30, 2004, by the National Agricultural Statistics Service.

Wisconsin farmers intend to plant 3.65 million acres of corn for all purposes, down 3 percent from the 3.75 million acres planted last year. Soybean acres, at 1.70 million acres in 2004, are down 1 percent from the 1.72 million acres planted in 2003, but up from 1.54 million planted in 2002. Although soybean acres planted decreased slightly, this is the second largest intended acreage for Wisconsin soybeans.

Nationally, corn acreage intentions are up fractionally from both 2002 and 2003. Growers intend to plant 79.0 million acres for all purposes. Expected acreage is up from last year throughout much of the Corn Belt as farmers are hoping to take advantage of higher corn prices. However, most States in the Southeast and southern Great Plains are intending to decrease their corn plantings as producers are switching to soybeans and cotton due to more favorable prices relative to corn. Soybean acres for 2004 increased 3 percent at the national level to 75.4 million acres, compared to 73.4 million planted last year. If realized, this will be the largest planted area on record and a rebound from the three year decline in acreage. Growers in all states, except South Dakota and Wisconsin, intend to plant more than or at least as many acres of soybeans as last year. Current high prices are encouraging many producers to plant more soybeans.

Wisconsin's corn growers intend to plant 24 percent of the 2004 crop with biotech seed having traits for insect resistance (Bt), 3 percentage points more than last year. Thirteen percent of the crop will be planted with herbicide resistant GM seed, a 4 percentage point increase from 2003. Corn seed modified for both insect and herbicide resistance (stacked traits), will be used on 2 percent of the acres planted. Overall, 39 percent of the Wisconsin corn crop will be planted with biotech seed, up 7 percentage points from 2003. Seed developed using biotechnology continues to gain popularity among the state's soybean growers. In 2004, 85 percent of soybean acres will be planted with biotech varieties, compared to 84 percent in 2003.

At the national level, 46 percent of this year's corn crop is expected to be planted with biotech seed, up 6 percentage points from 2003. Farmers reported 27 percent of the crop will be planted to Bt seed, 14 percent for herbicide resistance, and 5 percent of the corn crop with stacked trait seed. Soybean farmers indicate they will plant 86 percent of their acres with biotech seed in the upcoming crop year, compared to 81 percent in 2003.

Planted Acreage for 2002, 2003 and Prospective March 2004

Crop	2002	2003	Ind.2004	2004/03
	Thousand acres			Percent
WISCONSIN				
Corn, all	3,650	3,750	3,650	-3
Oats	430	380	405	+7
Soybeans	1,540	1,720	1,700	-1
Barley	55	55	45	-18
Winter wheat	200	205	240	17
Spring wheat	8	7	7	n.c.
Hay, all *	2,050	2,100	2,200	+5
Dry edible beans	7.7	6.0	6.0	n.c.
Tobacco, all*	1.5	1.8	1.7	-7
UNITED STATES				
Corn, all	78,894	78,736	79,004	n.c.
Oats	4,995	4,601	4,312	-6
Soybeans	73,963	73,404	75,411	+3
Barley	5,008	5,299	4,683	-12
Winter wheat	41,766	44,945	43,372	-3
Spring wheat	15,639	13,840	13,333	-4
Hay, all *	63,942	63,342	63,731	+1
Dry edible beans	1,929.7	1,406.1	1,333.0	-5
Tobacco, all*	428.3	416.2	414.6	n.c.

*Area harvested. Source: Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics.